



View east toward the park from Canal Bridge on NC Highway 126

One of the first questions to be answered was where to locate the main entrance to the park. NC Highway 126 functions as an external loop road for the park site. It was agreed that most visitor traffic would arrive from south of the park and would travel across Canal Bridge. Placing the main entrance close to the bridge would provide a close point of connection with the existing park facilities, especially the boat ramps. This western entry point would also minimize the number of visitors that would have to navigate the one lane bridge that crosses the Linville River.



The one lane bridge over the Linville River on NC Highway 126 just north of the park.

A second entrance to the park is planned near the Linville Bridge to provide access to facilities located on Long Arm Peninsula. This entrance eliminates the need for a costly internal loop road that would have to cross three internal streams and be routed through areas of very steep terrain. The Linville Bridge entrance will also provide access to the large in-holding parcel on Long Arm. This access point was a commitment made by the state as part of the land purchase from Crescent Resources.

The existing access provided through the public right-of-way along SR Old Hwy 105 will be maintained to provide service and emergency access only. This entrance may also be used to provide construction access to Paddy Creek Peninsula while the entrance roadway and bridge are under construction.



SR Old NC 105, a gravel public road currently provides access to the Center Parcel and the Paddy Creek Peninsula





Illustrative site plan for the Main Entrance to the park (inset from overall map on pages 38-39). The bridge across Paddy Creek will be wide enough to accommodate vehicles and the access trail for a single crossing point of the creek.



The image on the opposite page is a detail of the park plan that illustrates the State Park Main Entrance on Highway 126. The major park signage would be located along the highway. A small parking area will allow people to stop and take a short walk to the scenic overlook area. From there, visitors can look to the north and west viewing the Black Mountains in the distance. The access trail will continue downhill toward Paddy Creek and intersect with a major trail that runs south to the Canal Bridge. This trail will function as a section of the Over Mountain Victory Trail as well as provide a portion of the Lake James Trail proposed by Burke County that will encircle the entire lake. The access trail continues and will cross Paddy Creek along the widened bridge section of the entry drive.

Vehicular traffic entering the park will travel along the entry drive and will cross a new bridge spanning Paddy Creek. The creek crossing is planned at a location where the creek bed and flood plain narrows. The bridge span may approach 200 feet in length. A central bearing point in the bridge span may be used to reduce construction costs. As the trail will cross the creek via the bridge, the trail approaches will be designed to safely accommodate this movement for hikers and cyclists.

The Paddy Creek Bridge presents an early opportunity to set the visual character and detail for the rest of the park. Great attention will be given to the materials and massing of the bridge. It is likely that the bridge will be a precast span or bottomless arch culvert in order to make the span as economical as possible. Using native stone to face the bridge would be an appropriate way to blend the bridge with its surroundings. Massed plantings may be located at the bridge abutments to further blend the bridge structure into the creek bank.



The bridge crossing for Paddy Creek is planned at a location where the creek bed and flood plain are narrow



Using native stone to face the bridge will help blend the bridge with the existing creek bank





Illustrative detail for the Ranger's Residence, Visitors Center and Seasonal Barracks. Overall map is on pages 38-39.

